**Career: Actress**

Being an actor or actress is hard work. Competition for this job is so intense because many people are auditioning for the same roles and parts. They’re always under a lot of pressure, time constraint and stress. They also have to spend extra time in practices and rehearsals. Most of them need a second job in order for them to make enough money for a living.

**Career Description**

To be an actor or actress, you will need to have a lot of patience and should always be in good physical condition. You would love acting, performing and entertaining others.

They can find their own or have personal agents or a manager to find their jobs. Agents and managers can also deals with their contracts and plan their careers. They earn a part of the pay in their actor’s or actress’ contract. Actors often work with a drama coach, to make their characters realistic. They also research their roles to comprehend the story’s background better and sometimes have to learn a foreign language for them to develop the accent they need. All actors must have or be with at least one casting agency. Casting agencies are the agencies that are looking for talented people that work in different fields, such as singing, dancing, skating, etc.

**Education and Qualifications**

There are a lot of schools you can go to in New Zealand, but one of the schools most people go to is The University of Otago. To enrol at this school you will need to possess or show strong commitment.

You will need to take fourteen papers for the first level which is **Level 100**, sixteen papers for the second level which is **Level 200**, six papers for the third level which is **Level 300** and seven papers for the last level which is the **Above and Minor Level 100**. Once you have completed a degree in Performing Arts Studies, you can keep studying Performing Arts if you choose to. You can continue on and get the degree of Postgraduate Diploma of Dance or Arts, or the Master of Arts Degree.

**Everyday Life**

* **For a successful actor**

Their alarms are shouting early in the morning, and they quickly move straight down the kitchen eating the healthiest foods of all and might as well go for an exercise. Then they go to the studio and start reading their scripts, while getting their hair and make up done. With them trying to concentrate and learn their lines, they’re also getting another million questions from their agents and managers about what’s going to happen further in the day.

Five minutes later they are rehearsing their scenes. Then, they might have to go to photo shoots or interviews. They now get to have and enjoy some free time for themselves, going shopping, without having any idea that there’s a paparazzi watching their every single move. They get home and get ready either for a movie premiere or a party. They now come back from that and start to sign some contracts that need to be signed. They get to bed and have their ordinary days over the next day.

* **Struggling Actors**

A struggling actor usually spends their time, looking through the newspapers or surfing through the internet looking for second jobs because of how little their salary is. They audition for as many movies and ads they can get into, just so they can have enough money to live. They’re the ones that don’t really show enough ability and stamina to perform in big and live performances. They might have the best moves, voice or talents, but that’s not what the people in TV look for.

**Salary**

A salary of an actress may vary on how successful you are. If you’re an actress in a commercial or just someone in the background, you can get at least $40,390.50 a year. This salary can go up to $103, 38.00; this could be your salary for a month if you’re the lead of the movie.

You also can get a commission which is the money you get when you finish the task that’s needed to be done, which starts from $8.20 to $69, 097.00. Struggling actresses and actors get a total pay of $34,071.10 to be in the background of a scene with a few lines or an advertisement. But most of the times being in an ad can get you at least $89,000.00 and might as well depend on how long you’re in or what you’re doing. Successful actors and actresses can get a total pay of $110,659.00

**Career Path**

Being an actress is not that easy. You always have to start in smaller roles, like working behind the scenes with successful directors, serve on the boards of art companies or promote your own projects and designs. Then you work your way up, working in radio and television broadcasting, communications, films or dramatic literature. Dramatic Literature is the texts of plays that can be read.

Most people change work straight after this stage, like teach in a high school or college drama departments, acting conservatories or perform with local community theatre groups. If they do not choose to do this and keep going with the career they have now, they might as well work as extras with little or no lines. They now can try being in a commercial and start asking or auditioning for the bigger parts. They can also choose to make their own music or movies of their own choice.

**Highlights/Positives**

The positives of being an actress are that there are so many options you can choose from and actors and actresses appear everywhere. You would be able to see them either in TV, movies, concerts, internet, newspapers and catalogues. Travelling around the world for tours and music videos is another one of the great things an actress can have. The feeling of accomplishment and the pay is big time.

**Lowlights/Negatives**

There are quite a lot of things that can draw you back from being an actress. One of the worst things that could happen to you as an actress is to get rejected and to have to always believe in yourself even when you’re not in the mood or when you’re depressed. Another negative is the competition and the people who talk about you badly behind your back. It’s also really hard meeting the cold directors, photographers and casting directors, who can criticise you a lot.

**Career Contributions to the Community**

This career can contribute to the community in a lot of ways. Most actors do this by entertaining people in television, in a movie, music video or in concerts making music. They usually do this to help out a good cause by simply donating the money they get to the charity they choose. Some of them also go somewhere that’s public and participate in events. These are another one of their contributions. Some also might as well spend their free time teaching or sharing their skills in local community theatre groups.

**Why would this career suit my personality?**

I like to write fiction stories, draw or play music. I’m also really good at Performing Arts. I’m quite emotional but fun to be with. I can memorize music and songs easily and I can listen to music or watch the television while studying. I also love storytelling and writing plays. I have a wild imagination which I can always use in Performing Fine Arts. I’m really organised so I can handle all the things that need to be done such as, chores, homework, dishes and all of my other curricular activities. I can follow instructions that I am told and get it done to the best of my ability.

Therefore, even though being an actress can give you big time money and big time fame, a lot of things can draw you back.

**By: Cyril Pascual**